Executive Proclamation
State of South Dakota
Office of the Governor

Whereas, The Battleship 57 was launched at Camden, New Jersey, June 7, 1941, commissioned March 20, 1942, and was christened the U.S.S. South Dakota, after which she headed out on her first war cruise August 16, 1942, three years to the day before Japan was to surrender; and,

Whereas, In October 1942, during the Battle of Santa Cruz, she downed 32 Japanese planes while performing her prime task of defending the Carrier Enterprise; this being the first time in naval history a battleship had been given such a mission, and the U.S.S. South Dakota proved the wisdom of the tactic; and,

Whereas, In winning her first Battle Star at Santa Cruz, she also suffered her first wound, a 500 pound aerial bomb dropped by a dive bomber; and,

Whereas, The U.S.S. South Dakota officially accounted for 64 planes, participated in nine shore bombardments, and earned 13 Battle Stars for participating in every major naval battle in the Pacific, she rightfully owns the distinction as the most highly decorated battleship of World War II; and,

Whereas, In 1962, the Navy announced that it was going to scrap the battleship, a number of South Dakota citizens banded together to save part of the famous old Battleship "X", and the memorial was completed and dedicated with appropriate ceremonies September 7, 1969; and,

Whereas, The crew members are meeting in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, for their 18th biennial reunion on July 4, 2003:

Now, Therefore, I, M. Michael Rounds, Governor of the state of South Dakota, do hereby proclaim July 4, 2003, as

U. S. S. SOUTH DAKOTA DAY

in South Dakota and I call upon all citizens to join me in honoring the U.S.S. South Dakota and its crew.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of the state of South Dakota, in Pierre, the Capital City, this Thirtieth Day of June in the Year of Our Lord, Two Thousand and Three.

M. Michael Rounds, Governor

Attest:

Chris Nelson, Secretary of State